DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 344 463 FL 020 163

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TITLE Socially Deictic Use of a Body-Part Term in Turkish.
PUB DATE 89
NOTE 19p.; In: Kansas Working Papers in Linguistics, Volume 14, Number 1; see FL 020 157.
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Anatomy; Language Research; Linguistic Theory; *Semantics; *Turkish; *Uncommonly Taught Languages
IDENTIFIERS *Deixis

ABSTRACT

The use of one body-part term in Turkish, corresponding to the English "head," is examined. It is demonstrated that this term is the most unmarked body-part term in the language with the largest functional load in common usage. It is found to have a large number of derivations, especially with socially deictic meanings. Possible different interpretations of the meanings and different contexts of usage are considered. It is concluded that for Turkish speakers the term has some cultural significance and its varied uses illustrate cultural facts and social structure. A brief bibliography is included. (MSE)

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Socially Deictic Use of a Body-part Term in Turkish

Mübeccel Taneri

Abstract: In this paper I analyze the use of a particular body part term in Turkish. The analysis is partly based on the work by Liston 1972. Furthermore, I demonstrate that this particular body part term appears frequently in usage with socially determined deictic meanings.

Body-part terms (herein after "BP terms") display prominent functions in terms of the following three criteria (Liston 1972:333):

(1) they give rise to derived words,

(2) they spawn idioms,

(3) they appear in egressive polysemes, in other words, they are utilized outside their corporeal domains.

Liston provides some examples of BP terms with idiomatic usage based on a Serbo-Croatian English dictionary. For instance oko 'eye' occurs in 30 idioms (Liston 1972:334):

čuvati nešto kao zjenica svog oka

Literally, "to watch over something like the pupil of one's eye," and it means "to watch over the most important thing."

Some of the usages of BP terms in other domains in Serbo-Croatian include the following:

kapak	eyelid	lid (on a bottle)
oko	eye	eye (of a needle)
nos	nose	nozzle

The implication inferred from the above is that BP terms with the largest functional load occupy the highest level in the usage hierarchy. Their grammatical load is defined in terms of the above criteria.

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Kansas Working Papers in Linguistics, 1989, Vol. 14, no.1, pp. 105-122.

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In Turkish we also find a large number of lexical items derived from BP terms with some formative suffixes, such as -lE, -lI, and -sIz.[1] There are also expressions which incorporate BP terms and their derivative forms.

In this paper I will demonstrate that one particular BP term, baš 'head', has a significantly large number of derivations, especially with social deictic meanings.

The following procedures will be followed in the analysis of this term:

1. With respect to the formative suffix -lE, which derives verbs from nouns and adjectives, BP terms will be classified into two groups on the basis of frequency of their usage. If the derived verbs appear in more speech situations, they will be identified as unmarked. The marked category will represent those derived verbs whose usage is governed by some constraints in terms of speech situations.

The unmarked BP terms will be tested further by whether or not they (1) give rise to more derived words, (2) spawn more idioms and, (3) extend to the use outside their corporeal domains, e.g., social and topographical phenomena. Finally, some of their usages which call for a different approach to meaning will be discussed.

1.1. The suffix -lE, which is a highly productive one, derives verbs (mostly transitive) from nouns and adjectives illustrated as below:

temiz: adj. clean	-	temiz-le: v. to clean
baa: n. a string, cord etc. used to tie things	-	baa-la: v. to tie
taš: n. stone	-	taš-la: v. to throw stones
tuz: n. salt	-	tuz-la: v. to put salt on
paket: n. package	-	paket-le: v. to wrap to make a package

The above derivatives have a meaning based on (1) one of the inherent functions of the noun from which they derive, in the case of baa-la 'to tie' or tuz-la 'to put salt on, (2) the action whose end result is the

quality the adjective describes or the referent the noun stands for, in the case of temiz-le 'to clean' or paket-le 'to wrap up an item into a package' respectively. More examples of each type are given in the Appendix.

Similarly, almost all of the BP terms, (although not the compounded ones such as göz kapaí 'eyelid', function as verbs with the above mentioned verb formative. Although there is a change in their grammatical category, the semantic content is basically retained with the exception of only one BP term which will be discussed below. The usage of almost all of the derived verbs is governed by extra linguistic factors such as formality. Among the derivative verbs that appear in the sentences (a) below, baš-la 'to start, to begin' does not have any restrictions on its usage with respect to formality. Göüs-le, with its metaphoric usage 'face difficulty', can also appear both in formal and informal speech situations just like baš-la. The rest must have their (b) constructions in formal usage.

Regarding formality, I am mainly taking the speech of news announcers on TRT (Turkish Radio and Television) as the criterion for the concept of formal speech. The other criterion is the usage of language observed in official documents. The forms sub-grouped as (a) in the following sentences appear in informal speech situations. The alternative phrases in (b), however, will have to be utilized in formal speech situations. The following illustrate the point:

1. (a) baš-la : v. to start, to begin
head-der suff

(b) baš-la : v. to start, to begin
head-der suff

2. (a) göüs-le :
chest-der suff

v. i. to obstruct a moving object (i.e. a ball) with the chest, ii. to face with the difficulties, endure hardship

(b) göüs-ün-le yakala/karšıla
chest-poss 2sg-instr-der suff catch/meet

'catch/obstruct s.t. with chest'

3. (a) omuz-la: v. to put on your shoulder
shoulder-der suff

(b) omuz-un-a al
shoulder-poss 2sg-to put

'to put on your shoulder'

4. (a) diš-le: v. bite
tooth-der suff

(b) diš-in-le kopar
tooth-poss 2sg-instr detach

'to detach s.t. with your teeth'

5. (a) tirnak-la: v. scratch (with nail)
nail-der suff

(b) tirnak-in-la kopar
nail-poss 2sg-instr detach

'to detach s.t. with nail'

6. (a) parmak-la: v. get into with your finger
finger-der suff

(b) parma-in-la al
finger-poss 2sg-instr get

'to get into s.t. with your finger'

7. (a) dirsek-le: v. to nudge
elbow-der suff

(b) dirse-in-le dey
elbow-poss 2sg-instr touch

'to touch s.t. with your elbow'

8. (a) ayak-la: v. to smash with feet
feet-der suff

(b) aya-in-la ez
feet-poss 2sg-instr smash

'to smash with your feet'

It seems that in formal speech situations BP terms are rarely used. The context, for instance, in which the expressions in Nos 3 and 7 (b) above are likely to be

heard, is a dance hall where the instructor may utter the followings:

1. eš-in-i omuz-un-a
   partner-2sg poss-direct obj shoulder-2sg poss

   al
   take

   'Put your partner on your shoulder.'

2. eš-in-e dirsek-in-le dey
   partner-poss-acc elbow-2sg poss-with touch

   'Touch your partner slightly with your elbow.'

One of the characteristics of the derivative baš-la 'to begin', when compared with similar derivatives, is that the speaker thinks of no association between the BP term baš 'head' and its derived form bašla 'to begin'. When the consultants used for this project were asked about a possible relationship, they all stated except one who has some knowledge of linguistics that the apparent similarity between them is just accidental. It seems that what had started as a metaphor has become an arbitrary relation between the form baš-la 'to begin' and the referent the form baš 'head' stands for.[2] This is not the case with the other BP terms and their derivative verb forms subgrouped as (a) above which do not call for any metaphoric interpretation with the exception of göüsle 'to face difficulties.'

The above observations establish the status of baš 'head' as the most unmarked BP term with the largest functional load in usage.

The suffixes -sIz, and -lI derive adjectives from nouns as follows:

1. (a) ayak-lı: adj. with legs, as in:

   bir ayak-lı adam
   one foot-with man

   'a one-footed man'

   (b) ayak-sız: adj. with no legs, as in:

   ayak-sız kadın
   foot-without woman

'a woman with no legs'

2. (a) baš-lɨ: adj. i. with head, ii. with a knob, iii. in 'belli bašlɨ' well known, as in:

(i) iki baš-lɨ janavar
two head-with monster

'a monster with two heads'

(ii) baš-lɨ sopa
head-with stick

'a stick with a knob'

(iii) belli baš-lɨ kiši
well known person

'a notable person'

(b) baš-sɨz: adj. i. without a head, ii. without a leader, as in:

(i) baš-sɨz jeset
head-without corpse

'a corpse with no head'

(ii) baš-sɨz ulus
head-without nation

'a nation with no leader'

All BP terms can appear with these two suffixes and the derived adjectives are descriptive with respect to having or not having the quality that the noun stands for. Some formatives, however, do not appear with all BP terms. For instance -lIk, which derives nouns from nouns, does not occur with many BP terms. Frequently, the derivatives with this suffix carry the semantic content which indicates that the referent of the new form is an instrument with a specific function in relation to the given organ. The following illustrate the point:

1. göz-lük: n. glasses
eye-der suff

2. diz-lik: n. knee-pad

knee-der suff

3. kulak-lık: n. hearing aids
ear-der suff

4. aız-lık: n. pipe
mouth-der suff

5. baš-lık: n. i. helmet, ii. cowl, iii. briddle, iv. title of a book, v. heading of an article, vi. (in parts of Anatolia) bride price

As observed in the above examples, only the term baš 'head' has more semantic extensions than the rest.

In addition to the above usages, baš occurs also in more grammatical classes than the others. The following expressions function as adverbs whereas almost no other BP terms occur in this grammatical category.

baš-tan baš-a: adv. completely
head-from head-to

baš-tan ašaı / baš-tan yukarı : adv. completely
head-from bottom / head-from top

baš baš-a :
head head-to

adv. together, tête-à-tête, face to face; confidentially

2. H. C. Hony's Turkish-English dictionary (1947) provides about a hundred entries for baš. This outnumbers the number of entries for all of the other BP terms except göz 'eye', which has as many entries as baš. Among all these entries, very few seem to be obsolete, while some other expressions and proverbs, with which I am familiar, are not recorded in the dictionary, some of which may be considered to be regional.

2.1. I will first discuss some proverbs with the term baš. Proverbs are generally used more in rural areas where traditional values are relatively persistent (Hayes 1987). When formality is not required, however, proverbs appear in every layer of the social structure for advice and guidance as well as for making a point more succinctly. Because of the striking effect a proverb can produce, it would not be out of place to find some of them in some speech situations which are classified as formal in terms of one of the criteria mentioned

above, namely the use of language in official documents. The following expression, for instance, is often seen as a written warning for people to keep forests unharmed:

yaš kesen baš keser
wet cut-adj.cl.mark. head cut-aorist

'The one who cuts down a tree is just like the one who murders a man.'

For the following to be used properly, however, informal social settings are required:

- akıl-sız baš-ın
brain-without head-gen

jeza-sı-nı
punishment-poss 3sg-dirt. obj

ayak çek-er
foot endure-aorist

'It is the feet that endure the inconvenience that a brainless head causes.'

- baš ol da, soan baš-ı ol
head be somehow onion head-comp.suff-be

'Be a leader, no matter how unimportant it may seem to you.'

- akl-a gel-me-yen baš-a
mind-to come-neg-adj.cl.marker head-to

gel-ir
come-aorist

'What may not occur to you may happen to you.'

2.2. Apart from the proverbs mentioned above, there are verbs whose primary semantic content assume metaphorical usage when they are compounded with <u>baš</u>. The following provide examples:

baš kaldır- : v. to revolt
head to raise

- hükumete baškaldıran kabile liderleri bir bayrak
goverment revolting tribe leaders a flag

altında toplandı
under united

'The chiefs of the tribes that revolted against the goverment united under one flag'

baš ček- : v. to take the lead, to guide
head to pull

baš-ı ček-en kim
head-def pull-adj cl mark who

'Who is leading?'

baš-tan čık- : v.
head-from get out

'to throw off restraint, to get out of control, to be led astray'

çocuu baš-tan çıkarma
child-obj head-from be let astray

'do not cause the child to go astray'

2.3. Baš can be used in different constructions to indicate social ranks, specific points in both settled areas and in the area of residence. The following are some compound nouns indicating higher social status in the professional area signalled by the second part of the compound:

bašbakan: n. the prime minister

baščavuš: n. sergent-major

baškan: n. president, chairman

bašk'atip: n. first secretary, chief clerk

baškumandan: n. comander-in-chief

baš muharrir: n. editor-in-chief

baš murakıb: n. controller-in-chief (financial)

bašö:retmen: n. head master

There are no expressions, concerning BP terms, which refer to the opposite end of the social ranks, such as 'foot soldier'. The term 'foot', however, does

appear in grammatical constructions, but only with derogatory connotations.

With respect to residential areas the following show either a relative status or a specific area:

1. baš-kent: n. capital (of a country)
   head-city

2. köše baš-i: n. the corner (of a street)
   corner head-comp.suff

3. ojak baš-i: n. by the hearth, by the fire
   hearth head-comp.suff

4. yol baši: n. the cross road
   road head-comp.suff

5. baš uj-u-nda: at the side of the bed
   head end-comp.suff-loc

6. havuz baš-i: n. the pool and its surroundings[3]
   pool head-comp.suff

In most expressions, the deictic use of baš indicates 'top, starting point, beginning'. There are expressions, however, which challenge this observation, as these require further thinking. Observe the expressions:

1. alt baš / üst baš
   bottom head / top head

2. (a) tahta-nin üst baš-i 'the top of the board'
       board-gen. top head-poss

   (b) tahta-nin alt baš-i
       board-gen. bottom head-poss 3sg

       'the bottom of the board'

3. (a) oda-nin üst baš-i
       room-gen. top head-poss 3sg

   'the part of the room opposite to the door'

   (b) oda-nin alt baš-i
       room-gen. bottom head-poss 3sg

   'the part of the room with close proximity to the door'

It is quite reasonable to think that the referents of some spatial terms, i.e., oda 'room', karatahta 'blackboard', and sayfa 'a leaf of a book', are visualized in the shape of a head with sub-divisions as "lower" and "upper head" in the minds of the speakers.[4] Therefore, there is no conflict in the semantic content in the following:

sayfa-nın üst baš-ı
leaf-gen 3 sg top head-poss 3 sg

'the top of the page'

sayfa-nın alt baš-ı
leaf-poss bottom head-gen

'the lower part of the page'

In addition to the above different senses of baš, when antonym is involved, the term baš displays variability on the scale of collocational range as well. Its sense association differs depending on what combination of linguistic units it appears with. For example baš with the sense of enclosure appears as üst baš versus alt baš as discussed above while some other usages show different collocations as the following:

roman-nın baš-ı
novel-gen 3sg head-poss

'the beginning of the novel'

roman-ın son-u
novel-gen 3sg end-poss 3sg

'the end of the novel'

čay-ın baš-ı
stream-gen 3sg head-poss

'the source of the stream'

čay-ın aya-ı
stream-gen foot-poss

'the lower end of the stream or the impure parts of it'

The topographically extended usage of baš 'head' is as follows:

1. su baš-ı: n. at the fountain (spring or body of water)

2. göl baš-ı: n. the shore of a lake with foliage where people prefer to get some rest

3. yar baš-ı: n. top of a cliff

4. da: baš-ı: n. i. the top of a mountain, ii. away from one's hometown and immediate family

5. a:j baš-ı: n. top of a tree

6. tarla baš-ı: n. the part of a field with some saliency such as a tent or foliage

3. Some expressions demand different explanations of meaning whose scope encompass, among others, communicative intentions. With words, several purposes are achieved. Utterances have the power to state "who we are and what we hope our interlocutors know" (Rosaldo 1982:204).

1. baš üst-ü-ne 'I will'
head top-poss-dat

One of the categories of illocutionary acts is known as *commissives* (Bach and Harnish 1979). By uttering the above expression, the speaker performs an act of aknowledging a given order with the implication that it will be promptly carried out. For the act to be proper, the order must necessarily be uttered by someone with a higher rank or executive power in an institution. The same response to an order may be used as a sarcastic remark if the relevant felicity conditions are not fulfilled.

Similarly, but quite different in some respects, a promise about caring for someone and most likely providing for him moneywise is assumed with the following expression:

2. baš-ım-ın üst-ü-nde yer-in
head-gen 1sg-gen 3sg top-poss-on place-poss 2sg

var
there is

Literally, 'you have your place on top of my head'

The social setting is quite different from that for sentence 1 above. No formality of any sort originating

from rank or power difference in a social structure is involved. Rather an informal, unpresumptuous promise is assumed in a humble manner. The hearer might be an in-law who has just lost his spouse and has been engulfed with grief or a young mother with three or four children, whose husband has just died in a tragic accident leaving them practically at the mercy of anyone. It is quite possible for anyone in the community to assume the benefactory role. However, the expression under discussion cannot be properly used by a total stranger but can be by the members of the family circle, relatives or very close friends.

Some expressions reflect conventions precisely and effectively. A certain social situation is formally observed with their usages. For instance, the following are the ones seen in obituary columns, on sympathy cards or when they are delivered personally to perform the act of expressing condolence:

(a) kal-an-lar-a baš
survive-adj cl mark pl-indir.obj. head

sa:lık-ı diler-iz
health-dir.obj. wish-1pl

'We wish health to the heads of those survived'

(b) baš-ınız sa: olsun
head-2pl healthy be

'May your head be healthy.'

On those days, when one would have to spend hours, and in some cases days, in reaching his destination, what was said as a response to a question within greetings, which is highly cultural-bound, is now jokingly proclaimed to insinuate an indirect request. It may well be the case, however, that in rural areas this speech situation is still alive. The following brief conversation illustrates the point:

Host: aç-mı-sın, susuz-mu-sun,
hungry-ques-2sg thirsty-ques-2sg

uykusuz-mu-sun
sleepy-ques-2sg

'Are you hungry, thirsty or sleepy?'

Guest: göl baš-i-nda uyu-du-m
lake head-comp.suff-loc sleep-past-1sg

gel-di-m
come-past-1sg
'Before coming here, I slept by the lake.'

On the above, the guest, by leaving out the part of the requested information (concerning the state of being hungry), leaves the host to figure out the unspoken intention, who in turn would ask the hostess to serve their guest some food.

baš-ım-a gel-en-ler-i
head-poss 1sg-indirt.obj come-adj.cl.mark-pl-obj

duy-du-n-mu
hear-past-2sg-ques

'Have you heard what has happened to me?'

The above utterence is meant to instigate the beginning of a conversation. However, if we imagine a context in which the hearer can not afford for such an interaction to take place, say in an office where the hearer is obliged to get a particular job done, he might indirectly refuse to listen to his co-worker, stating an excuse such as the following:

üzgün-üm ne ol-du
sorry-1sg what happen-past

diy-e-mi-yecek-im
say-ability-neg-future-1sg

'I am sorry I cannot ask what happened to you.'

baš-ım-da şimdi bu iš var
head-poss 1sg-loc now this work there is

'I have this work to do right now.'

If the above assumption about the speech setting is a fact, the failure to cooperate to initiate a conversation would not be taken as an offense. Even though performatives are utterances in which saying something is equal to doing something, the illocutionary act has to be interpreted according to the context in which it is performed (Souza Filho 1984:100). Therefore, the refusal to initiate a conversation can be taken, in some cases, as a request for help.

4. Conclusion: After finding that the BP term baš carries the largest functional load in the usage of the language in general, I have presented some of the expressions that it gives rise to. Possible different interpretations of the use of some of these expressions have been investigated. This brief examination supports the assumption that, for the speakers of Turkish, the BP term baš has some cultural significance although probably it is not unique with this language. One thing that is certain is that the usages illustrated in this paper show cultural facts and the social structure of the society. Some of the expressions assume certain meanings in accordance with the context they are used in, and thus in this sense, they are regarded as deictic.

NOTES

1 Due to the rules for the vowel harmony in Turkish, morphemes display variations whose underlying representations are generally symbolized in the literature with the usage of capitalization for the vowel segment.

2 baš has an entry as a BP term in an etymological dictionary (Clauson 1972:375). So is baš-la as a derived verb from baš with the semantic content 'to begin to lead' (381).

3 A pool, usualy in a summer residence, has two-fold significance: (i) with running water in the form of a fountain, it supplies water for farming, (ii) in summer, it serves as a place where social gatherings are conducted.

4 I am indebted to my Prof. Akira Yamamoto, whose insightful explanation has resolved this apparently conflicting usage.

APPENDIX

Nouns as the stem:

kök: n. root, -le: v. tr. to root out

zehir: n. poison, -le: v. tr. to poison

kapak: n. lid, -la: v. tr. to put the lid on

bíčak: n. knife, -la: v. tr. to stab

iine: n. pin, needle, -le: v. tr. to pin down

čivi: n. nail, -le: v. tr. to nail

zamk: n. glue, -la: v. tr. to gluc

ütü: n. iron, -le: v. tr. to iron

čapa: n. hoe, -la: v. tr. to hoe

su: n. water, -la: v. tr. to water

yaa: n. oil, -la: v. tr. to oil

yara: n. wound, -la: v. tr. to wound

topal: n. a lame, -la: v. intr. to lame

kundak: n. a bundle, -la: v. tr. to bundle

kutu: n. a box, -la: v. tr. to put in a box

tembih: n. warning, -la: v. tr. to warn

sol: n. left, -la: v. tr. take over from left

karší: n. opposite, la: v. tr. to meet

yol: n. road, way, -la: v. tr. to send

čözüm: n. solution, -le: v. tr. to solve

kučak: n. lap, -la: v. tr. to embrace

tapu: n. the official registered form of a property

-la: v. tr. to register property into s.o's name

yük: n. load, -le: v. tr. to load

Adjectives as the stem:

zor: adj. difficult, -la: v. tr. to exercise force or effort on s.o. or s.t.

ačik: adj. open, -la: v. tr. to clarify

hafif: adj. ligh, -le: v. intr. to be relieved

keskin: adj. sharp, -le: v. tr. to sharpen

serin: adj. cool, -le: v. intr. to cool off

zayif: adj. thin, slim, -la: v. intr. to lose weight

šišman: adj. fat, -la: v. intr. to put on weight

kuru: adj. dry, -la: v. tr. to dry

kara: n. black, -la: v. tr. (1) to cross out, (2) to vilify/defame

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